

1 North Front St., Belleville

Urban Design Brief

November 1, 2025



Introduction

The proponent, Belleville Affordable Housing Limited Partnership (BAHLP), is a partnership between the developer, Summers & Co., and the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte, Garden River First Nation, and Missanabie Cree First Nation.

The subject site is located at 1 North Front St. in Belleville. A former Service Canada commercial site, which the partnership recently redeveloped into a mixed-use facility called Sagonaska Place in 2024.

The residential portion is fully rented. BAHLP has actively sought suitable tenants for the commercial space over the last year, to no avail. BAHLP is proposing to convert the ground floor commercial space of the existing building into six (6) residential units and constructing a nine (9) storey residential tower accommodating an additional 53 residential units on the footprint of the existing surface parking lot.

The purpose of this brief is to demonstrate that the proposed development supports the city's growth goals and urban design guidelines, as outlined in the Official Plan and the City Centre Intensification Plan, Schedule E2 of the Official Plan.

Sincerely



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Design Intent

The design intent is to build a rental apartment building on an underutilized surface parking lot on the north side of the existing building at 1 North Front St. The proposal supports intensification within the City Centre and is supportive of the growth objectives of the city outlined in the City's Official Plan.

There is surplus parking under the existing building which permits the re-development of the existing surface parking lot.

The site is located within the City Centre Intensification Plan area and presents an opportunity for an urban response in an emerging growth area of the city and the proposal will help define the urban character of the emerging neighbourhood.

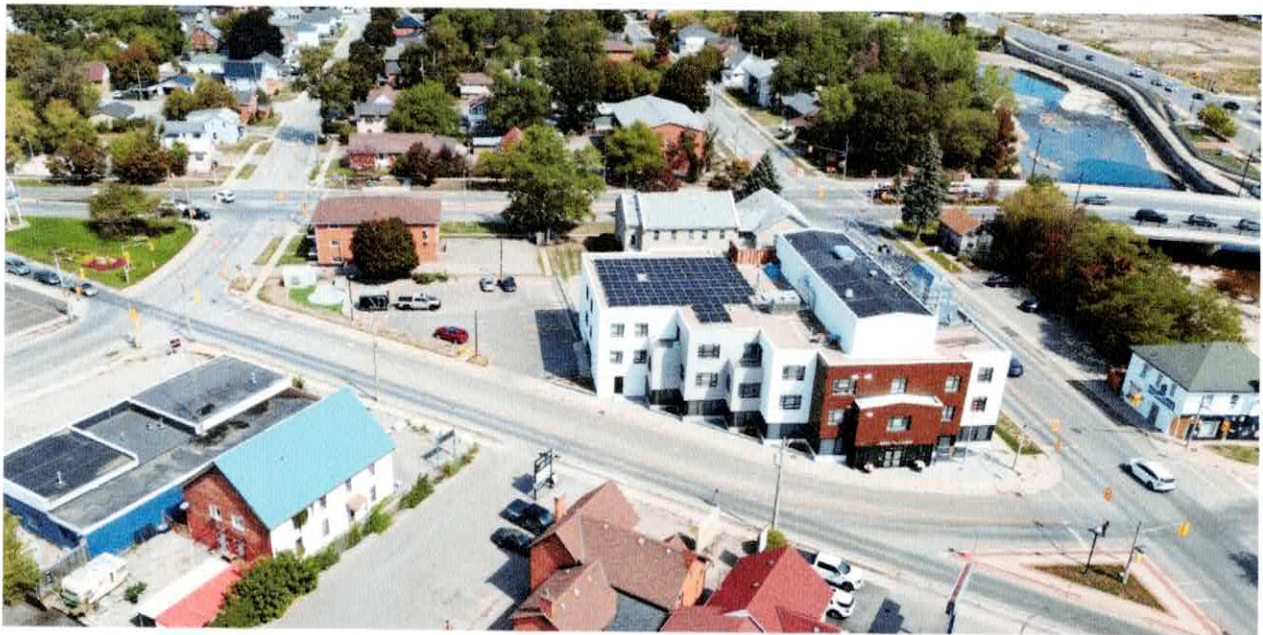


Figure 1 – existing site conditions looking east

The site sits on the major north south corridor and presents an opportunity to define a transition between the low-density area to the north and the downtown core to the south. It also recognizes and supports the corridor's evolving nature and is key to supporting the growth of the downtown core.

The proposal continues the transformation of the site from a single use institutional building to a more activated neighbourhood site supporting more vibrant urban neighbourhood.



Figure 2 ... showing the site's proximity and connection to the downtown core.

Project Description

The proposal is in the 'West Village' neighbourhood of the City Intensification Plan and is zoned MX1 in the City of Belleville Zoning By-law 2024-100.

The subject property directly abuts the two other properties located on the same block. The property known municipally as 5 Grove Street is developed with a two (2) storey multi-unit dwelling while the property at 12 Moira Street is developed with a two (2) storey building accommodating a community centre (Community Services of Belleville and District). Both abutting properties have surface parking lots adjacent to the subject site. Properties within the immediate vicinity of the subject property predominantly accommodate low-rise, mixed-use development with some strictly residential development located to the northeast. Three parkettes are located opposite each of the three corners of the subject property. The Moira River is located south of the subject property.



Figure 3 ... - the site is in the West Village portion of the City Centre Intensification Plan

Section 3.8.2 c) of the Official Plan encourages 'compact, intense development of lands designated in the City Centre to ensure that the core area remains a key focal point in the city. To achieve this objective, buildings that maximize land utility should be encouraged'.

The proposal provides an urban response to a transition site in the Intensification Plan area and will act as gateway to the high-rise buildings of the downtown core and supports the evolution of the neighbourhood into a more urban context.

The rendering below demonstrates the high-quality design of the proposal. The street walls have balconies and sufficient glazing to express the residential character of the proposal. Active landscaping will soften the edges of the building. The existing building to the south and the three storey podium to the north will create a tempering of the massing of the nine story tower in the middle of the site.



Figure 4... rendering of the proposal demonstrating high quality design with glazing and balconies which reinforces the residential form. The existing building to the south and the podium to the north helps soften the massing of the tower in the middle of the site.



Figure 5...Active landscaping at the north end of the site softening and defining North Front St.

Proposal Statistics

Lot Area	2255 sq m	Building height	27 m
Building Footprint	1845 Sq m	Landscape area	94.3 Sq m
GFA	4401 sq m	Amenity area	242 Sq m
Lot Frontage	138 m	Podium height	3 storeys
Front setback	.6 m	Tower height	6 storeys
Interior side yard setback	1.2 m		
Exterior side yard setback	.3 m	Underground Car Parking	65 spots
		Bike parking	19
Unit counts:			
1 Br	39		
2Br	20		
Total	59		

Response to the City Urban Design Policies

The subject site is in the City Centre Intensification Plan area, part of the City of Belleville's official plan. In the plan the downtown core and surrounding neighbourhoods are slated for increased density to support a more vibrant urban centre. Mid to high-density mixed-use developments are supported, subject to constraints of the individual site. It is expected that mid to high density proposals demonstrate high quality design to contribute to a vibrant downtown core.

The existing facility has commercial space on the ground floor which has been vacant for over a year. It is felt that this is not a good location for commercial activities and therefore it is recommended the facility be repurposed to be a residential building.

Urban Design Guidelines:

In addition to the Urban Design policies set out in Section 7.6 of the Official Plan, the following urban design and built form guidelines should be considered when undertaking any development or improvement project in the City Centre:

- building setbacks from public roads should be minimized except where lands are required for sidewalks, road widening, or landscaping, to frame the street;

- the North Front St. street wall will be close to the property line of North Front St., except for the setbacks for the entrance to the residential tower and underground garage.
- large exposed blank walls should be avoided. All visible sides of a building should be finished and treated similarly to the front. Where exposed walls exist, screening through landscaping should be provided;
 - the walls of the podium and tower will have ample glazing and balconies to clearly reinforce the proposal as an active residential building in the emerging neighbourhood
- where appropriate, a building's first storey should be taller in height to accommodate a range of non-residential uses;
 - the building will be entirely residential since this location is not attractive for commercial activities
- rooftop mechanical equipment should be screened with architectural features;
 - rooftop mechanical equipment will be screened
- outdoor patios should be encouraged, and ideally located adjacent to pedestrian corridors;
 - the roof of the podium will be an outdoor patio to be used as amenity space for the tenants
- building entrances should be oriented to streets, parking facilities and Trails;
 - the front door to the residence will be clearly identifiable on North Front St., beside the entrance to the underground garage, which will also be accessed off North Front St.
- major parking and delivery areas should be confined to the rear or side of buildings. Loading and garbage enclosure areas are to be screened from public view;
 - the building will be entirely residential; no loading area will be required. There is a garbage room in the existing underground garage.
- tree planting along roads should include large specimen dense foliage trees appropriately spaced with clumped planting of mixed species at focal points; parking lots should be properly demarcated, landscaped and lighted;
 - there will be trees planted at the north corner of the site and active landscaping along the North Front St. frontage
- signs should not impact the heritage attributes of a built heritage resource and be consistent with the scale of the building upon which they are placed;
 - no signage
- accessibility and visitability should be actively promoted and improved where possible through new development;
 - targeting RHF certification
- landscaping and green open space should be provided at appropriate locations to complement buildings, and as relief from concrete and asphalt surfaces;
 - landscaped open space at the north corner

- the upper storeys of higher rise-built form should be incrementally stepped back to reduce shadowing.
 - The 3-storey podium is stepped back at the north frontage of the property to transition from the low density residential to the north to higher density downtown core

Design policies relevant to the proposal are:

7.6.2.2 Streetscapes

e) New development and redevelopment shall contribute to achieving an attractive, pedestrian-oriented streetscape by generally locating buildings close to the street, orienting principal entrances towards the street, and locating active uses at street level.

- Building frontage along North Front St. will have active landscape elements to define the street and delineate building edges, building and parking garage entrances and pedestrian walkways.
- The facades of the building will have active fenestration and balconies to clearly define the residential nature of the proposal

7.6.2.4 Site Layout

a) The site layout of a new development should be designed to respond to the existing built form, surrounding uses and the existing and planned character of the surrounding area.

d) Development and redevelopment shall be designed to contribute to a safe and comfortable environment for pedestrians by providing walkways that are well lit, accessible, attractive, and safe and that are connected to the public sidewalk and parking areas.

- The proposal responds to the need for intensification through gentle density recognizing the surrounding context. The building fronts on to a major arterial road which is a gateway to the downtown core
- The proposal is a mid-density and supports a gentle transition from low density neighbourhoods to the north and the downtown core to the south

7.6.2.5 Built Form, Scale, and Massing

a) new buildings shall be attractive, functional, and compatible with nearby existing buildings and planned development in relation to massing, scale and design, and with the overall streetscape.

- The proposal has minimal setbacks which helps define the street and support an urban context of the downtown.

b) Building design for multi-residential uses shall consider the following locating buildings close to the street with greater massing at major intersections and in central areas; orienting primary façades and pedestrian entrances to public street frontages; avoiding blank façades along public streets and public spaces; incorporating architectural elements and design features to add visual interest and to enhance the streetscape, particularly on corner lots, at gateways, at vista terminations, and along

arterial roads; v. incorporating exterior design elements such as fenestration, building articulation, weather protection, rhythm of façades, and the use of high-quality materials; vi. providing screening of parking areas, service areas, and utilities; vii. minimizing the appearance of rooftop mechanical equipment and providing screening where applicable; creating private and shared amenity areas in multi-residential and mixed-use developments; and incorporating universal design principles.

- Accessing the downtown from either North Front St. or Pinnacle St., the massing of the building will signal the approach to the downtown core.
- The facades of the proposal will have fenestration and balconies consistent with a high-quality residential building
- The roof of the podium at the north end of the building will be outside amenity space for the tenants
- All parking will be underground reinforcing the urban context of the proposal

c) An appropriate transition in scale shall be provided between buildings, the public realm, and abutting development, through a variety of design methods including angular planes, stepping height limits, location and building orientation, and the use of setbacks and stepbacks of building mass.

- The 3-storey podium at the north end of the site and the existing 3 storey building at the south end of the site will act a transition to the 9-storey tower in the middle of the site

7.6.2.6 Landscape Design

a) Landscaping should be used to define spaces; add visual interest; define pedestrian areas; v. delineates public and private spaces; and improve the aesthetic quality of neighbourhoods.

- Landscaping will be used to soften the edges of the building and will clearly delineate pedestrian walkways, building entrances and garage entrances

7.6.2.10 Cultural Heritage

a) Council shall encourage conservation, retention, and enhancement of cultural heritage resources, heritage, and heritage conservation districts through effective community design.

- The proposal will feature indigenous artwork and designs to reinforce the connections to the local indigenous community

e) Development and redevelopment adjacent to designated cultural heritage resources or within a Heritage Conservation District shall be sensitively designed to complement and reflect the form and massing, and surrounding heritage character, including landscape features, through the selection of appropriate architectural features, materials, colours, and lighting in accordance with the provisions of a Heritage Conservation District Plan, where they exist, and/or Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment.

- While the proposal is for new construction the project sponsors are indigenous and will enhance indigenous culture identity ...

Summary

The proposal represents a valuable opportunity to continue the transition of 1 North Front St. from single use institutional facility into an active and lively anchor to an emerging mixed-use neighbourhood and reinforce connections to the downtown

Appendix 1 – building elevations



Figure 1 – South Elevation



Figure 2 – West elevation



Figure 3 – North Elevation



Figure 4 – East elevation